

STATEMENT OF THE APPLICANT**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Vestry of St. Patrick's Parish, on behalf of the St. Patrick's Episcopal Church and Day School (the "**School**"), collectively ("**St. Patrick's**" or "**Applicant**"), hereby submits this application (the "**Application**") to the Board of Zoning Adjustment (the "**Board**" or "**BZA**") for a modification of significance of an approved special exception for its private school campus in a residential Zone District. The Application is for the property located at 1801 Foxhall Road NW (Square 1346, Lot 827) (the "**Campus**" or the "**Property**"). The Property is located in the R-1-B Zone District. The Property is bounded by Foxhall Road to the west, Whitehaven Parkway to the north, open space and single-family homes to the east, and single-family homes to the south.

In 2006, the Board approved a special exception for the Property in Order No. 17429 to allow the School to expand its operations to include a new middle school, high school, and playing field as well as to develop the single-family homes now in the square (the "**Original Approval**"). The School constructed the playing field and stadium seating at the Property but did not move forward with construction of the School buildings. The remainder of the Property is an open field, with a portion devoted to a garden used for instructional purposes. The Original Approval included an Operations Plan (the "**Operations Plan**") which, among other things, did not allow the use of the Property for summer camps, though it allowed the School to return to the BZA and apply for a change to this restriction.

The School proposes four modifications as part of the Application to allow: (1) the use of the Property, including the playing field, for summer camp; (2) the addition of a climbing wall to

an existing retaining wall at the Property; (3) the construction of three pavilions adjacent to the Garden & Outdoor Learning Space; and (4) the addition of solar panels over the existing stadium seating to enhance the Campus's sustainability (the "**Modification Plan**"). The Board has jurisdiction to grant the modification requested pursuant to Subtitle X, §901.1 and Subtitle Y, §704.1 of the Zoning Regulations (11-X DCMR § 901.1; 11-Y DCMR § 704.1).

II. BACKGROUND

A. St. Patrick's Episcopal Church and Day School

The School is an Episcopal parish day school providing education from nursery school through middle school in Washington, D.C. The School was founded in 1956 originally as a nursery school and by 2002 provided education through the eighth grade. The School currently has approximately 490 students arrayed across its campuses. The School's campus for Nursery through Grade 5, the Whitehaven Campus, is located on Whitehaven Parkway NW, approximately 0.3 miles from the Property. The School's Middle School for Grades 6 through 8, the MacArthur Campus, is located on MacArthur Boulevard NW, approximately 0.6 miles from the Property as well. At the Property, the Foxhall Campus, the School operates a regulation-sized athletic field and the instructional garden.

B. Foxhall Campus

In 2006, the Board approved a redevelopment plan for the Property and two neighboring lots. The Property was to be improved with a new high school, allowing the School to expand its student body. Also, the middle school was planned to relocate to the Property. The Original Approval allowed 440 students and 100 faculty and staff at the Property. One of the other lots subject to the Original Approval was to remain open space, and the last lot was to be developed

with single-family homes. The single-family homes have been constructed, and the open lot remains open, as anticipated by the Original Approval.

For the School lot, however, the School only constructed the playing field, accompanying stadium seating, and parking along a large vehicular turnaround adjacent to the playing field to provide access. The playing field opened for operation in the spring of 2012. The remainder of the improvements were not constructed in the timeline allowed by the Original Approval. Therefore, that portion of the Original Approval has lapsed, and the proposed buildings and full program at the Property are no longer part of the approved plan.

III. SUMMARY OF MODIFICATION

The School has been studying ways to better utilize the Property now that the buildings and facilities proposed in the Original Approval are not moving forward at this time. The playing field is used throughout the school year for student activities and competitions. The remaining open area on the Property does not currently have steady, active uses other than the instructional garden. The Modification Plan will allow for year-round uses and will create more active play space for campers and students alike and will increase the sustainability of the Campus.

A. Summer Camp Use

The School proposes to eliminate the provision of the Operations Plan that restricts the ability to operate a summer camp on Campus. Because the Property has not been built out as initially anticipated, the School needs to reconsider its use of the Property. Summer use of the playing field and open field makes sense at this point. Further, the Operations Plan that was part of the Original Approval explicitly noted that “the School reserves the right to return to the BZA to request approval of a summer school or camp program at such time in the future as the School

deems it appropriate.” The School believes the timing is appropriate to begin a summer camp program at the Property.

The School has been partnering with Headfirst Summer Camps, which provides a variety of camps throughout the D.C. Metro area, including STEM camps, sports camps, and general day camps. The Property would be used for day camp outdoor operations, as detailed below. Campers would be located at the Property and on the School’s Whitehaven Campus. Campers may be dropped off at either the Foxhall Campus or the Whitehaven Campus and may walk between the campuses or use the shuttle bus. All vehicular traffic, including the bus, would utilize the large vehicular turnaround located at the Property.

A main component of the camp operations will be the ability to use the playing field. Rotating groups of campers and staff will have access to the playing field. The School anticipates approximately 50 students and six staff will utilize the playing field at any given time as part of the camp use. The School is proposing no changes to the playing field itself as part of the camp use, though the separate Modification Plan involves conversion of the existing retaining wall into a climbing wall and installation of solar panels. These improvements will benefit campers, staff, and visitors, as outlined in this Statement.

The open space area to the north and northeast of the traffic turnaround adjacent to the field provides another ideal space for camp use. The area can provide opportunities for gardening, STEM programming, and general play space, with gardening already underway during the school year. Groups of approximately 50 campers and six staff would utilize this open field area at any given time, rotating among the other programs and uses that will be part of the camp – the playing field at the Property and the uses on other School properties. In the area currently used as an instructional garden, the School proposes installation of three open-air

pavilions and a hoop house to enhance associated instructional possibilities there and, having recognized anew during the coronavirus pandemic the desirability of outdoor settings, to offer additional locations for teaching and learning.

B. Climbing Wall

The Modification Plan also includes the conversion of the existing retaining wall at the north of the playing field into a climbing wall as shown on Sheet 2 of the drawings submitted with this application. As explained in detail in the drawings, the climbing wall will be constructed through modular panels that can be affixed to the retaining wall to create the climbing wall. The climbing wall will make a more practical use of this blank façade and provide additional active space for campers and other users of the Property.

C. Solar Panels

Finally, as part of the Modification Plan, the School intends to add a solar canopy over the existing stadium seating as shown in the drawings submitted with this application. The solar panels will allow the Property to generate renewable energy, increasing the Campus's sustainability and the School's overall commitment to sustainability. In addition to providing renewable energy, the panels have the added benefit of shading spectators during events at the playing field.

IV. COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to 11-Y DCMR § 704.7, the Board may grant a modification of significance to an original approval, and in making its decision, the Board's consideration is "limited to the impact of the modification on the subject of the original application, and shall not permit the Board to revisit its original decision." The Original Approval granted by the Board found that the original plan met the requirements for a special exception to allow a private school in a

residential zone. Pursuant to 11-U DCMR § 203.1(m) and 11-X DCMR § 104, the Board may approve private school use in a residential zone provided that the school is “located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to adjoining and nearby property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions.” Additionally, the school must provide “ample parking space, but not less than that required by [the regulations].” 11-U DCMR § 203.1(m)(2). Finally, under 11-X DCMR § 901.2, an applicant must show that the requested relief will be in harmony with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps and will not adversely affect neighboring properties.

In the Original Approval, the School demonstrated that the full build-out under Order 17429 met these standards. The proposed use is far less intensive than that contemplated under the Original Approval. The Modification Plan will not substantially change the School’s current impact on the surrounding neighborhood and should not change the Board’s previous determination that the School’s application meets the requirements of the Zoning Regulations.

A. Noise

The proposed Modification Plan will not have a negative impact on the neighboring properties due to noise. The Modification Plan will utilize the existing playing field during the summer in a similar way to the School’s current school year operation. Further, while the camp proposes to use the climbing wall and the open field to the north of the playing field for campers, these areas are far removed from the nearby residential uses and are buffered by the surrounding landscaping. Further, the total number of campers and staff, as discussed below, will be significantly less than the Original Approval’s number of students, faculty, and staff.

Finally, the solar panels will not have a noise impact on the use at the Property. Therefore, the Modification will not change the noise impacts assessed in the Original Approval and will not have a negative impact on surrounding properties due to noise.

B. Traffic and Parking

The proposed summer camp use will not negatively affect the traffic and parking provided at the Property. The existing traffic circle and drive adjacent to the playing field will be used for pick-up and drop-off for campers at the field. Those dropping campers off will not be allowed to park at the Property. Campers moving between the Foxhall and Whitehaven campuses will do so on foot or via shuttle bus. The Applicant will provide a report from a transportation consulting firm prior to the public hearing addressing the full traffic and parking implications of the Modification.

The climbing wall will not affect traffic and parking as it will be utilized by those already at the Property for school or camp use. Further, the solar panels will not have an impact on the traffic and parking at the Campus. Therefore, the Modification Plan will not have a negative traffic or parking impact on the neighbors or surrounding property.

C. Number of Students and Faculty/Staff

The Original Approval allowed 440 students and 100 faculty/staff members at the Property. However, because the new buildings were not constructed, the Property does not currently have that level of population at the Campus at any one time. The camp use would involve significantly fewer people than was permitted under the Original Approval. As detailed above, the School proposes that approximately 50 campers with approximately six staff at one time will be on the playing field. Additionally, the camp would allow approximately another 50 campers and six staff members to utilize the vacant field north of the turnaround area. Therefore,

the maximum total number of campers would be 100 and the maximum number of staff would be 12 at any given time, a number significantly lower than the Board allowed as part of the Original Approval. Therefore, the proposed number of campers and staff during the camp use is consistent with the Board's finding in the Original Approval and will not adversely affect the neighboring properties.

The climbing wall will not affect the number of people on the Property as it will be able to be utilized by those already at the Property for school or camp use. Further, the solar panels will not have an impact on the number of people at the Property. Therefore, the Modification Plan will not have a negative impact on the neighbors or surrounding property.

D. Purpose and Intent of the Zoning Regulations

The Modification Plan is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning regulations. As detailed above, the Modification Plan balances the needs of the School with the surrounding community and does not materially change the effect of the plans previously approved by the Board, particularly because the School buildings were never constructed at the Property. Finally, the Modification Project will not use Lot 826, the Northern Dell, which was to remain as open space under the Original Approval. The Modification Project will not adversely affect neighboring properties from noise, traffic, parking, design, or other conditions, so the requested modification satisfies the standards stated in the Zoning Regulations.

Further, the Modification Plan continues to be consistent with the District of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan, which supports the continuing growth and stability of educational resources in the District. It is consistent with the Environmental and Land Use Elements of the Plan, particularly due to the addition of solar panels over the bleachers.

The Modification Plan provides for an appropriate use of the Campus without the addition of buildings to the Property. The Campus will continue to provide a large amount of green, open space, appropriate for its adjacency to residential homes, but will allow the Property to be activated throughout the year.

V. CONCLUSION

For the above reasons, this Application meets the criteria set forth for a modification of significance in 11-Y DCMR §704.7 and also continues to meet the criteria in both 11-U DCMR §203.1(m) and 11-X DCMR §104 for special exception approval for a private school. Further, the modification is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and will not adversely affect neighboring property. Therefore, the School respectfully requests the Board of Zoning Adjustment approve this modification application.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/
Allison C. Prince

/s/
Meghan Hottel-Cox